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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION

Combined initial, second and third reports of the States parties

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

94-30644

REPORT

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

INITIAL, SECOND AND THIRD REPORTS OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) IN COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

JUNE, 1994

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INTRODUCTION:

A. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women became effective for St. Vincent and the Grenadines on August 4th, 1981.

2. This Report is submitted by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in pursuance of its obligations under Article 18 of the said Convention whereby each State Party is required to submit a Report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which it has adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention.

3 . As required by the Guidelines established by CEDAW this Report will consist of the following parts:

Part I provides general information regarding St. Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as the general legal framework within which the rights, as defined in articles 1 to 16 of the constitution are implemented. This section establishes the context within which the Convention operates.

Part II will provide more specific information relating to articles 1 to 16 of the Convention. This Section examines the individual Articles of the Convention and the measures adopted to ensure their implementation. Each Article is reproduced in its entirety and is followed by the measures adopted.

4. This Report was prepared and coordinated by the Department of Women's Affairs, a department in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Women's Affairs, with input from all relevant Government Departments to which the Report relates. The preparation of the Report has enabled each Ministry to become more familiar with the Convention and to consider the measures they have taken to ensure its implementation .

5. In the preparation of this Report, Non-Governmental Organizations have been informally consulted and have contributed to the process.

6. Distribution of copies of the Convention as well as the present Report will be done following its presentation to the UN, both to Non-Governmental Organizations as well as to the various Government Departments, particularly those which provided specific contributions to the Report. As a comprehensive update on the

status of women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Report will be an important source of information.

7. The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is committed to working towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women by continuing to fulfill its obligations under the Convention.

PART I

THE CONTEXT OF THE OPERATION OF THE CONVENTION

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES.

GEOGRAPHY:

1. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is located in the Eastern Caribbean and is also referred to as one of the Windward Islands. Geographically, it lies at Latitude 13, 15"N of the equator and 61, 57' W of the Greenwich Meridian. It comprises the island of St. Vincent as well as other islands known as the Grenadines - Bequia, Mustique, Mayreau, Canouan, Union Island, Palm Island, Petit St. Vincent and a number of other uninhabited islets[1].

2. The Island of St. Vincent, is considered the 'mainland' and houses the main commercial sector as well as the administrative capital of the country, Kingstown. It is approximately 11 miles wide and 18 miles long and has an area of 138 square miles. Together with the chain of smaller Grenadines, - most no longer than a few miles- the country has a total area of approximately 150 square miles.

3. St. Vincent itself is entirely volcanic and mountainous and is dominated by a volcano, Soufriere, in the North. This volcano is still active and rises to a height of 4,000 feet. It last erupted violently in 1979 forcing the evacuation of more than 20,000 persons from the area. The climactic conditions as well as the rich volcanic soil has enabled the island to produce a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and other crops.

4. The climate of St. Vincent is tropical and the country enjoys a dry season from January to May and a rainy season from June to December. The temperature ranges from 66 to 88 degrees fahrenheit and the annual rainfall varies from 60 " to 150" in different parts of the island.[2]

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[1] "The Businessman's Guide to the OECS 1991-1992" , a Directory of Commerce, Industry & Tourism, KDK Publications.

[2] "St. Vincent and the Grenadines in Figures, 1992", Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

HISTORY:

5. Archaeologists believe that St. Vincent and the Grenadines was first inhabited by indigenous people known as the Ciboney Indians. These were followed by the Arawaks and the Caribs who originated in the Orinoco Basin area of South America and migrated Northward throughout the Antilles . According to historical reports, St. Vincent and the Grenadines was not visited by Christopher Columbus and the islands were left largely undisturbed by the European Colonists until the seventeenth century.

6. In 1626 the French were in possession of St. Vincent and in 1627 the British took over. Because of the fierce resistance of the Caribs , France and England signed the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle in 1748, declaring St. Vincent a neutral island. Changing hands again as both the British and French sought for possession, finally in 1783, by the Treaty of Versailles, St. Vincent was declared a British possession.

7. The British were unable to effectively occupy the territory due to continued Carib resistance, however in 1797, in what became known as the Carib war, the Carib leader Chatoyer was killed and after surrendering the mass of Caribs were transported to the island of Roatan off the coast of Honduras, Central America.[3] The British then fully colonized St. Vincent as it had its other Caribbean possessions, building an extensive sugar cane industry which became the mainstay of the islands economy until the decline of the industry in the twentieth Century.

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[3]"Discover St. Vincent and the Grenadines", Warren Associates Publishing.

B. GENERAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE

8. St. Vincent and the Grenadines became a self-governing state in association with the United Kingdom on 27th October, 1969 and obtained Independence on 27th October 1979.

9. The Political system of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a Democracy patterned on the Westminster model as obtains in the United Kingdom. The country is a constitutional monarchy. It has a Governor General appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, who represents the British Sovereign who is the Head of State. The Governor General appoints as Prime Minister a member of the House of Representatives who commands the support of the majority of members.

10. Legislative power is vested in Parliament, comprised of a House of Assembly with 15 representatives elected by the people in General Elections and six senators appointed by the Governor-General, four on the advice of the Prime Minister and two on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition. The Country is divided into fifteen electoral constituencies, which includes the Grenadines.

11. In General Elections held on February 21st, 1994, The New Democratic Party (NDP) won twelve of the Fifteen seats and presently form the Government. The next election is due in 1999.

12. The Cabinet is the Executive body of Government. Its members are the Prime Minister, who is the Chief Executive Officer, and the Ministers who are appointed by the Head of State, the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. The Executive is responsible to Parliament.

13. Subsequent to attaining its Independence from the United Kingdom in 1979, St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 1985 passed the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Act[4] to provide for the implementation within the State of the Treaty establishing the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

14. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States has as its primary objective the promotion of cooperation among the Member States at the regional and international levels in the areas of Foreign Policy and Economic Cooperation. To this end the Member States agree to pursue joint policies in various fields such as:

- External Relations including Overseas Representation;
- International Trade Agreements and other External Economic Relations;
- Financial and technical assistance from external sources;
- International marketing of goods and services including Tourism;

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[4] Chapter 140, Vol. 4, Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Revised Edition, 1990.

- External transportation and communications including Civil Aviation;
- Economic integration among the Member States through the provision of the Agreement establishing the East Caribbean Common Market;
- Matters relating to the sea and its resources;
- The Judiciary;
- Currency and Central Banking;
- Audit;
- Statistics;
- Income Tax administration;
- Customs and Excise administration;
- Tertiary education including University;
- Training in public administration and management;
- Scientific, technical and cultural co-operation;
- Mutual defence and security ; and
- Such other activities calculated to further the purposes of the Organization as the Member States may from time to time decide.

15. As part of the implementation of this Treaty, St. Vincent and the Grenadines shares a High Court and a Court of Appeal with the other Member States of the Eastern Caribbean.

16. Within St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Judiciary is independent. The Legal System is based on English Common Law. The Highest Judicial Body is the Privy Council in England to which Appeals from the OECS Court of Appeal can be taken. At the local level,the Magistrates Court is the Court of primary jurisdiction for most civil and criminal matters.

C. LAND AND PEOPLE

1. DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

17. This section provides a basic socio-demographic overview of the situation obtaining in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in order to provide a contextual framework for the Report. The Tables are contained in Appendix I.

18. In 1991 a comprehensive Population and Housing Census was carried out in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The data gathered from that census forms the bulk of the statistical information in this Report. Some comparative statements will be drawn from a previous census which was carried out in 1980.

19. The population of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as per the latest census figures, increased from 104,066 in 1988 to 108,965 in 1992. This indicates an annual growth rate of 0.8%. The Population distribution by age group for the period 1988 - 1992 is shown on Table 1 (Appendix I).

20. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a small country. However, the population density is still manageable. Between 1990 to 1992 it had moved from 271 to only 279 persons per square kilometre on mainland St. Vincent. Most of the island's mountainous interior is covered with forest and is unoccupied. The majority of the population therefore live on or near the coast in villages or larger settlements. The capital Kingstown continues to have the highest population density with 8,140 persons per square mile although the census indicates a decrease in this figure from 1980 census which showed a population density for Kingstown of 8,701 persons per square mile[5].

21. The overall increase in the population between 1980 and 1991 has been affected by emigration. Between 1980 and 1991 female emigration increased and is now in excess of male emigration. "Female emigration of 39% higher than that of the males, combined with natural increase of 3.7% lower than males would have implications for the sex ratio composition of the population and also the number of households headed by males compared with females."[6]

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[5] 1991 Population and Housing Census Report, Volume 2, pg.7, Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Kingstown.

[6] "St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 1991 - Population and Housing Census Report, Volume 2" pg. 5, Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Kingstown.

22. The crude birth rate rose from 24.4 in 1988 to 24.7 in 1992. Within the same period the birth rate has remained stable, the death rate has fluctuated slightly and the infant mortality rate has decreased. The total fertility rate stood at 2.8 in 1992. The average life expectancy of Vincentian males has been put at 69 years and of females 73 years. (See Table 2, Appendix I)

23. In 1991 the Population in St. Vincent and the Grenadines was divided almost equally between men and women. Approximately 37% of the total population was under 15 and 6.5% were over 65. Of the female population, 36.7% is under 15 years which is less than the figure for males in that age range. There are, however, a greater number of females than males who are over 45 years of age.

2. ECONOMY AND LABOUR

24. Like many economies in the developing world, the economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a small open economy dependent on imports and the production of primary commodities for export. Agriculture has over the past decade maintained its position as the leading productive sector of the economy (See Table 3, Appendix I).

25. This factor is reflected by its extreme vulnerability to external shocks. Expansion slowed slightly to an average of 6.5% per annum for the period 1988 - 1992 against the backdrop of recession in the industrialised countries and the continued weak economic conditions all around.

26. Inflation as measured by the Retail Price Index had increased to 4.0% on average for the period 1988 -1992. The main factor influencing consumer price increases was the War in the Persian Gulf during the latter half of 1990 and the early part of 1991 and its impact on oil prices. (See Table 4, Appendix I)

27. The average per capita GDP in nominal terms for the period 1988 - 1992 was E.C $3,966. At the end of 1992 the per capita GDP was E.C. $4,908 compared with that of E.C. $2,844 at the end of 1987.

28. One key export crop, bananas, has become the mainstay of the economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines as well as other economies of the Windward Islands. (The figures for the Production of Bananas and other commodities are shown in Table 5, Appendix I for the period 1983 - 1992.) Whilst Agriculture's contribution to GDP in 1992 was 17.36%, Bananas' contribution to total exports in 1992 was 63.8%. This represented an export of approximately 79,863 tons of bananas valued at E.C. $112,269,869 million. This critical source of income has now been adversely affected by the emergence of the European Single Market which introduced changes to the previous arrangements for bananas between St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the United Kingdom, its main export market.

29. Other sectors of growing importance are light manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, construction and tourism. The tourism sector is expected to strengthen over the next few years as Government intensifies its efforts in this direction.

'Government's overall strategy for the development of the economy is centered on increasing output and improving productivity, the key sectors being agriculture, education and tourism. Particular stress will be placed on broadening the productive base of the economy through crop diversification, livestock and fisheries development, an improvement of education

and the carefully targeted promotion of an expanded and specialised tourism product.'[7]

30. The development of the economy has to some extent been financed through foreign loans and the issuing of development bonds. The relationship between the ratio of debt service to GDP over the period 1985 -89 is shown in Table 6. The issue of management of the External Debt has been of critical importance to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and continues to be closely monitored.

31. The overall context within which the economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines develops is always subject to changes within the international environment. The country has sought to minimise the impact of these changes by seeking to form strong linkages with other countries in the Caribbean in the pursuit of common development strategies. It is part of CARICOM, the Caribbean Community, an important regional body which seeks to harmonise action at the regional level in various areas such as economic policy, foreign policy, and education among others.[8] The most recent challenge facing CARICOM is the need to examine the possible impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on Caribbean economies and to develop a coordinated response.

32. The economy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is also affected by the climactic conditions. It lies within the Hurricane belt and its economic infrastructure is extremely vulnerable to the destruction produced by hurricanes .

33. Employment within the economy is constrained by the level of economic activity available. Table 7 (, Appendix I) illustrates the Labour Force and Participation rates by Sex. Tables 8 & 9 provide data on employment by major occupational groups for 1980 and 1991. The employment rates for 1980 and 1991 were 80.5% and 82% respectively.

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[7] "St. Vincent and the Grenadines Development Plan : 1991 - 1995, Balanced Growth and Sustainable Development", pg. 16, Central Planning Division, Ministry of Finance and Planning, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

[8] Caricom Member States include Barbados, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Belize, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, Guyana, Bahamas and Montserrat.

3. SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

34. The Ethnic composition of the population of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is contained in Table 10. The tables indicate that the ethnic composition did not change significantly between 1980 and 1991. In 1991 the African/Negro/Black group comprised 77% of the population.

35. Vincentians tend to be very religious and there are a plethora of religious denominations in the Island. Of these, the Anglican, Methodist and Pentecostal, all Christian based religious groups tend to dominate. There are very few non-christian groups within the country.(Table 11)

36. The language spoken within the country is English. This is also the language of instruction in schools and that utilised in public documents. The adult literacy rate has been placed at 80% in 1990.[9]

37. In 1991, only 32.9% of the 27,002 households in St. Vincent and the Grenadines were headed by persons of either sex who were married. The remaining households were headed by persons who were either widowed, divorced, legally separated or never married. This does not necessarily mean that they were single parent households since there is also within the society the prevalence of cohabitation between non-married persons. Female headed households, however, accounted for 39.5% of the total number of households.(See Table 12) Between 1980 and 1991 households headed by males increased by 40.1% whilst female headed households increased by 23.5%.

38. The Perinatal death rate in St. Vincent and the Grenadines was 2.7% per 1000 live births in 1991 an improvement in the 1990 figure when it had risen sharply to 5.4% after maintaining some stability in the two previous years. The infant mortality rate fell slightly from 20.8% in 1990 to 19.3% in 1991.

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[9] "1994 Caribbean Basin Commercial Profile",Caribbean Publishing Company Ltd.

D. GOVERNMENT MACHINERY FOR WOMEN

39. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Women's Affairs houses the Department of Women's Affairs. This Department was intitutionalised in fiscal year 1984/85 with the establishment of a Women's Desk within the Ministry of Tourism, Information, Culture and Women's Affairs. This later was upgraded to a Women's Affairs Department with an increase in personnel. The role of the Department was to promote the social, political and economic interests of women and to give direction and support to their role in development.

40. As part of its support to women the Government also provides some financial support to the National Council of Women, (NCW) the body which was instrumental in the establishment of a Women's Desk.

E. GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE CONVENTION IS IMPLEMENTED

41. The Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines provides the main frame of reference for the protection of basic human rights. By virtue of the Constitution, men and women who are of full age (18 years) possess equal rights. This is laid down in Article 1. which states: "...every person in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms, ... whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest....." These human rights Provisions can be enforced in the High Court. However the provisions of the Convention cannot be enforced in the High Court since they are not automatically part of the Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

42. The judicial and social means of implementing the Convention are enshrined in the Constitution as well as in other legislation including the Labour Laws, the Criminal Code, the Equal Pay Act and other legislation which give support to the Articles of the Convention.

PART II

INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

(Each Article is reproduced in its entirety and is followed by details of the measures taken to implement it).

ARTICLES 1 - 3

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term 'discrimination against women' shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

(a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

(b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

(c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;

(d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;

(e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;

(f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;

(g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

Article 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

ARTICLES 1-3

ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION

1. The Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines came into operation on the 27th of October, 1979.

2. The Constitution embodies within Article 1 the key provision pertaining to the equal right of both sexes to the protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms as long as the exercise of these freedoms does not interfere with the rights and freedom of others or the public interest.

3. In addition there are other provisions which in themselves provide for the equal treatment of men and women in certain respects. Article 93 of the Constitution which enables women who are citizens and married to foreign men to make an application for their husbands to be registered as citizens.

4. Specifically, however, under Article 13 the Constitution states that :

"13 (1)...no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect.

(2) ....no persons shall be treated in a discriminatory manner by any persons acting by virtue of any written law or in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority.

(3)....the expression "discriminatory" means affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by sex, race, place of origin, political opinions colour or creed whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages which are not accorded to persons of another such description."

5. Although it may appear that Article 13 (3) of the Constitution prohibits laws which can be considered discriminatory in favour of women, Article 13 (4) of the Constitution states that:

"Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to any law so far as that law makes provision --....

(d) whereby persons of any such description as is mentioned in subsection (3) of this section may be subjected to any disability or restriction or may be accorded any privilege or advantage that, having regard to its nature and to special circumstances pertaining

to those persons or to persons of any other description is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society."

6. It is clear that by virtue of the above provision, any laws passed in favour of women should not be considered inconsistent with the Constitution.

7. In support of the above, Article 101 establishes the Constitution as the supreme law of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and subject to the provisions of the Constitution, any other law inconsistent with the Constitution shall to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

8. Once a woman is of the view that she has been discriminated against she may seek redress in the High Court as provided for under Section 16 of the Constitution. An Appeal lies from the High Court to the Court of Appeal and from there to the Privy Council.

9. Although no specific law has been passed prohibiting discrimination against women, some legislation exists which embodies the principle of equality between men and women . One such piece of legislation is the Equal Pay Act (No. 3 of 1994) which makes provision for the removal and prevention of discrimination, based on the sex of the employee in the rates of remuneration for males and females in paid employment. There is also a Bill presently before Parliament proposing amendments to the Domestic Violence Act. This Bill seeks to provide protection by means of summary proceedings in cases involving domestic violence. This would allow for a more rapid response to complaints in the cases of violence against women and children. It also seeks to strengthen the powers of the Magistrate Court to make financial provisions for victims of domestic violence.

10. The Penal provisions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are administered on the basis that everyone who is charged with a criminal offence is presumed innocent until proven guilty. There is, however, no institutionalised legal aid in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

ARTICLE 4

SPECIAL MEASURES

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

ARTICLE 4

SPECIAL MEASURES

11. The statistics provided by the 1980 and 1991 Population and Housing Census indicate that much work still remains to be done in improving the legal, economic and social situation of women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Over the past decade this work has begun to take shape. However the Government recognises that there is an ongoing need to continue its efforts.

12. As part of the recognition of the special needs of Vincentian women, a Women's Desk was established by the Government in 1985 at the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. This has since been upgraded into the Department of Women's Affairs with responsibility for promoting the social, political and economic interests of women and their role in development.

13. The Department,although constrained by human and financial resources, has made some notable achievements over the time of its existence. Through the initiative of the Department progress has been made in several fields including the amendment of the Constitution to give equal rights of citizenship to foreign husbands of Vincentian wives, the passage of an Equal Pay Act, the alleviation of sexual harassment and abuse through the application of more severe penalties, the improvement of the Maintenance Act to reinforce the property rights of women and the promotion of the appointment of more women to Public Boards.

14. The Development Plan of the Government has proposed strategies and programmes in the areas of legislation, employment, health, education and Programme support. The aim of these programmes is the promotion of the social and economic status of women.

15. The Department of Women's Affairs has been supported by the National Council of Women, which is an umbrella organization of some non-governmental women's organizations in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The National Council of Women is an autonomous body which receives some financial support from the Government for its programmes.

16. In the area of employment the Department of Women's Affairs has 'assisted in entrepreneurial development and business skills training for self employment; organised skills training apprenticeship in non-traditional areas; sourced funding for participation in pre school teacher training and sourced seed money

for families and groups'[10].

17. In the area of education the Department of Women's Affairs has made some progress in collaborating with other sections of the Ministry in developing an educational programme that is aimed at promoting changing attitudes regarding family life and the role of men and women in society. This work is mainly related to addressing the problem of teenage pregnancy which has remained a major source of concern. The Department has collaborated in the design and implementation of programmes in parenting, attitude change, leadership, human resource development, program and project design, project writing and monitoring.

18. In the area of health, support has been given to existing programmes being carried out by the Ministry of Health in relation to AIDS, alcoholism and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and domestic violence.

19. The Department intends to continue its work in the above areas although it needs to improve its data-collection capacity in order monitor and document more effectively the situation of women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

20. The Government has recently passed the Equal Pay Act (Act No. 4 of 1994) which is designed to ensure equal remuneration between males and females. An important provision of that Act is the section 2(d) which expressly states that favourable treatment given to an employee in connection with the birth or expected birth of a child is not to be considered discrimination between males and females.

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[10] National Report of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for United Nations 4th World Conference on Women, 1994 ' pg. 17, Women's Affairs Department. Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Culture and Women's Affairs.

ARTICLE 5

ELIMINATION OF STEREOTYPES

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

ARTICLE 5

ELIMINATION OF STEREOTYPES

21. The social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines still result in the perception that women are limited to the fulfilling of certain reproductive roles.

22. This perception has contributed to the relative absence of women in political leadership and has reinforced the stereotyping of women in certain roles. There are , for example, only two women elected to Parliament, and only three women contested the recent General Elections, out of a total of thirty -three candidates.

23. The most serious result of the perception of women in the country, however, has been the high incidence of domestic violence, particularly violence against women. The Women's Affairs Department conducted research during the period 1986- 89 which revealed that 75% of the perpetrators of violence against women were males of common law relationships, 15% were husbands and 10% some other male relative. Victims were largely women between 13 and 34 with no recorded occupation. The study found that in the majority of cases the abuse was physical assault which resulted in lacerations, abrasions and serious bruises. Out of a sample of 705 cases, only 15% of the perpetrators were actually convicted[11]. The problem with many of the cases of domestic violence was that many of the victims were in a dependent relationship with the perpetrators. Most of the time, in the case of mothers with children, they were dependent on the perpetrator for economic support. Often, they had no other place to go to escape the violence.

24. St. Vincent and the Grenadines has no Women's shelters. Limited counselling services are provided by the Department of Women's Affairs and the Social Welfare Department, the Church, as well as some small informal NGO counselling programmes.

25. The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has recently tabled a Bill to address the issue of domestic violence by strengthening the capacity of the Magistrates Courts, which is the court of lowest jurisdiction, to provide relief. The Bill, which to date has received its first of three readings in Parliament, seeks to provide protection by means of summary proceedings in cases involving domestic violence.

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[11] National Report of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, United Nations 4th World Conference on Women, pg. 49 (Draft Report, Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth, Culture and Womens Affairs,) 1994.

26. The proposed Law will provide for a Magistrate's Court or the Family Court to grant the following remedies:

A Tenancy Order which will vest in the applicant the tenancy of the dwellinghouse which is being held by the perpetrator of the acts of domestic violence;

An Occupation Order which will grant the prescribed person, i.e the person against whom the act(s) of violence was committed, an order granting the person the right to live in the household residence to the exclusion of the person against whom the order is made.

A Protection Order which will prohibit the person against whom the Order is made from entering or remaining in any household or area specified in the Order, from entering the place of work or education of any prescribed person or from molesting a prescribed person.

27. It is expected that the provisions of this legislation will allow more cases of domestic violence to be effectively dealt with.

28. The related issue of stereotyping of roles is strongly affected by the socialising of boys and girls within the Vincentian society. Girls are socialised to fulfill the roles of caregivers and homemakers whereas boys are socialised to be outward looking and to follow traditional male oriented professions. This is reflected in the prevalence of girls in such professions as teaching and nursing and the relative absence of boys from such professions. In the same way, girls are notably fewer in such professions as architecture, construction, auto-mechanics, electricity, plumbing etc.

29. Within the education system there is an acceptance that there is a need to reduce the stereotyping of roles. For this reason both sexes are exposed to similar disciplines and training within the system. However, there is the realisation that the socialisation within the home and wider society also influences boys and girls to choose traditional skills even when offered a wider range of options. Despite this fact, however, there is a greater exposure within the school system of boys to domestic skills and girls to technical skills.

30. It is interesting to note that this situation exists despite the high incidence of female headed households.

31. Several Ministries within the Government offer Family Life Education programmes, notably the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. Within these programmes the approach taken is to promote equal responsibility between males and females for the care and socialisation of children. The Ministry of Education in

particular, makes an input into the curriculum of all Government primary schools by ensuring that Family Life Education is included.

ARTICLE 6

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND PROSTITUTION

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

ARTICLE 6

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND PROSTITUTION

32. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines there is no known traffic in women and whatever prostitution exists is very difficult to assess due to the very discreet nature of these liaisons. This situation can be said to obtain as a result of the relatively low level of tourist activity within the State.

33. There are several offenses in the Criminal Code (Vol.IV, Chapter 124) which deal with prostitution. These include the following:

- Causing or encouraging prostitution of a girl under 15 years;

- Causing prostitution of women;

- Man living on earnings from prostitution;

- Detaining a women against her will in a brothel;

- Woman who for the purposes of gain exercises control over a prostitute; and

- Any person living on the earnings of a male prostitute.

Prostitution itself is indirectly discouraged under Section 285 (d) of the Criminal Code which prohibits soliciting for any immoral purpose in any public place.

34. The growth of the tourist industry may produce more outward manifestations of prostitution. However at this point in time it is not possible to make any conclusive statements on the relationship between the tourist industry and prostitution. In its Five year Development Plan the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines intends to continue to promote tourism. However, it will be closely observing the impact of this industry on the local population.

ARTICLE 7

WOMEN IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

ARTICLE 7

WOMEN IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

35. Women of St. Vincent and the Grenadines received the right to vote when Universal Adult Suffrage was introduced in 1951. Since then women have voted in General Elections and By-Elections held in the State. Voting is regulated by the Representation of the People Act[12] . The age of majority , which has been established in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for both males and females is 18 years [13].

36. Elections were held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in February 1994 and in those elections women voters were in the majority. Of a total of 75,000 registered electorate, 38,465 were females and 37,259 were male. In reviewing how many women actually voted the figures show a correspondingly high participation of females in the actual elections. Of the total of 66,727 persons who actually voted, 33,987 were female and 32,740 were male.

37. The situation in relation to women's participation as candidates is, however, completely different. In the recent elections there were only three women out of a total thirty-three candidates. This, however, must be measured against the fact that for twenty years, (1957-1979) only one woman contested parliamentary elections .

38. Whilst the legislation does not place any specific limitation on women's participation as candidates for any political party, social and cultural factors converge to reduce women's participation in leadership roles. The qualifications for candidates to be elected as Representatives or nominated as senators apply equally to men and women however women are deterred by the other stresses placed on them by virtue of the domestic roles they often have to play. Even where single women are available to stand as candidates they are often unwilling to subject themselves to the often abusive type of campaigning which takes place at the level of local politics.

39. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines there are two women elected to political office in the fifteen member House of Assembly. One holds the Ministerial Portfolio in the Ministry of Health and the

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[12] Chapter 6, Vol I , Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

[13] See Age of Majority Act, Chapter 164, Vol. V, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Environment and the other is a Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Communications and Works. This indicates that there is some input of women at the highest levels of decision making and power. However, within the Government structure, some work remains to be done to increase women's participation in the development and formulation of government policies.

40. In the implementation of government policies, women are fairly well represented although they are mainly concentrated at the clerical and administrative levels. In 1991 in the Civil Service there were 3,786 male employees and 3,147 female employees. Despite this fairly large number of female employees very few women are represented at the senior level compared to males.

41. There are no formal obstacles preventing women from taking part in public life and women have been assuming greater leadership roles outside of the direct party political sphere. Within Public Corporations and Statutory Bodies, the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has sought to have women represented at the management level as well as within the decision making structure. However, there is still the need to increase the number of women at these levels. (See Table 13).

Table 13: Participation on Statutory Boards, Public Corporations & Other Government Bodies by Sex, 1994

Boards, Commissions, Etc.	Male	Female
Liquor Licensing Board	13	3
Prisons Visiting Justices	11	2
National Broadcasting Corporation	5	2
Central Supplies Tenders Board	6	1
Development Corporation	10	-
Valuations Appeal Board	3	-
Physical Planning and Development Board	14	-
National Insurance Scheme	9	-
General Equipment & Services Corporation	7	-
Transport Board	6	-
St. Vincent Port Authority Council	7	2
Air Transport Licensing Authority	3	2
Carnival Development Committee	15	4
Lewis Punnett Home Board of Trustees	4	2
Central Water and Sewerage Authority	7	1
Nurses Selection Committee	2	7
St. Vincent Banana Growers Association	11	1
Pesticides Control Board	6	-
Arrowroot Industry Association	9	2
National Sports Council	11	1
Housing and Land Development Corporation	8	1
Public Assistance Board	11	5
St. Vincent & the Grenadines Trust Auth.	7	-
General Nursing Council	3	7
Income Tax Appeal Commission	2	1
St. Vincent Marketing Corporation	7	2
National Lotteries Board	3	-

SOURCE: Office of Prime Minister

42. Within the Judiciary, there are two High Court Judges, one of which is female. This therefore represents a good proportion. The Registrar of the Supreme Court is a male. At the lower level, within the Magistracy, which is the court of lowest jurisdiction there is one female out of a total of three.

43. Within Non- Governmental Associations, Social Service clubs and church organizations, women play major leadership roles. There are many non-governmental organizations in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and they focus on various issues. Some of them, particularly the service organizations such as the Red Cross and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) have a long history within the country. Other more recent organizations arose following upon the stimulus of the Development Decade and the Decade for women.

44. There are at the moment three political parties in the country. These are the ruling New Democratic Party (NDP), the Movement for National Unity (MNU) and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Labour Party (SVGLP). These political parties all have sections which organise their female membership.

45. Within the legal profession, women participate in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bar Association. In 1994 there were a total of nine female barristers out of a total of forty. This figure is set to increase as seven new student loans were granted by the Development Corporation for females to study law in the 1991 -1992 period.

ARTICLE 8

WOMEN AS INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

ARTICLE 8

WOMEN AS INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

46. St. Vincent and the Grenadines has two diplomatic missions. These are located in Washington, U.S.A. and at the United Nations. All the heads of these missions are men, although a woman holds a senior position at the Embassy in Washington. She is the Deputy to the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ambassador and therefore represents the country's interests in the Organization of American States and the United States. There is also a Vincentian Consulate in Toronto, Canada headed by a man.

47. St. Vincent and the Grenadines also has joint representation with other countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The OECS representative in Canada, the High Commissioner to Ottawa, is a woman and the OECS representative to the European Community in Brussels is a man. There is also an OECS Representative to the United Kingdom who is a man.

ARTICLE 9

NATIONALITY

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their Nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

ARTICLE 9

NATIONALITY

48. The Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines[14] provides for all persons born in the State before or after Independence to become citizens.

49. The Constitution also gives equal right to males and females who are married to persons who are not citizens, to have the husband or wife acquire citizenship by virtue of the marriage. However, a woman does not automatically become a citizen by virtue of being married to a Vincentian, application must be made for her to be registered as a Citizen under the Law . This enables the woman to choose whether or not she wishes to become a Citizen.

50. A female, who is a Vincentian citizen, may by virtue of the Constitution, also pass citizenship to her child even if the child is born outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In this respect she has equal rights as a male Vincentian citizen. She may pass her Vincentian citizenship to her child notwithstanding the fact that she may be married to a non-Vincentian.

51. By virtue of the Citizenship Act,[15] a woman may pass citizenship to her child if the child is born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

52. Women and men in the State have equal right to dual citizenship. This is also stated in the Citizenship Act. Marriage to someone who is not a National of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or a change in the nationality of her husband does not affect the nationality of the woman. Both males and females are, however, allowed to renounce their Vincentian Citizenship if they so wish.

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[14] Sections 90-95, Chapter 2, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

[15] Chapter 80, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

ARTICLE 10

EDUCATION

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education as well as in all types of vocational training;

(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

(g) The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

(h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

ARTICLE 10

EDUCATION

53. The Education system in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is divided into Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary and Post-Secondary. Post- Secondary education may include training at the Technical College, the Teachers Training College or the Nursing School all of which are Government -run institutions. However it may also include some short term training in specific fields, run by private agencies.

54. At the Pre-primary level, there are a number of kindergartens and day-care centers, all of which are privately run.

Table 14. ENROLLMENT IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS, BY SEX

Pre-Primary Schools	1980	1991
Both sexes	825	2,402
Male	421	1,186
Female	404	1,216

* Source: 1980 and 1991 - Population and Housing Census Report, Vol.2. 1991

Access to the pre-primary facilities are dependent upon the capacity of the parent or guardian to pay the fee requested. However, as Table 14 shows, the enrollment level has increased by approximately 191.2% between 1980 and 1991 with female as well as male children having equal access to pre-primary education. This is not a result of an increase in the birth rate for this age group, but can be attributed to other factors such as the increase in the number of working mothers.

55. The Government has limited its participation in pre-primary education to an annual subvention obtained from UNICEF and training for staff of pre-schools[16]. It intends in future to continue providing support mainly by giving technical assistance for training and improving curriculum.

56. Government has the most control of education at the primary and secondary levels. At the primary level, most of the schools are financed by the Government. There are some 65 primary schools

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[16] National Development Plan, Ibid, pg 133.

in the country which are Government operated and there are five privately owned and run primary schools. Of the sixty-five Government primary schools, thirteen (13) are classified as urban and fifty-two (52) as rural. At the secondary level there are 21 secondary schools . Thirteen of these secondary schools are classified as rural and eight are located in the capital Kingstown and its environs and classified as urban. Of the total number of secondary schools eleven are privately owned but receive Government assistance [17]. The geographic distribution of the primary schools is fairly even and all rural communities have access to a primary school within close range. At the secondary level the distribution is less even. Education is free at the primary and secondary level although students are expected to finance textbooks, uniforms and other incidentals.

Table 15 : EXPENDITURE ON SELECTED GOV'T DEPARTMENTS

	1989/90	1991	1992
	Expenditure E.C $	Expenditure E.C$	Expenditure E.C.$
HEALTH % of total	21,684,793 17.3	22,121,551 15.8	24,013,291 15.1
EDUCATION % of total	25,842,710 20.6	28,962,246 20.7	31,720,046 20.0
WOMENS AFFAIRS % of total	57,880 0.05	49,573 0.04	58,721 0.04
HOUSING % of total	6,524,406 5.2%	7,578,980 5,4	7,668,367 4.8
COMM. DEVELOP. % of total	275,597 2.2	439,134 0.3	336,853 0.2
SOCIAL WELFARE % of total	3,543,382 2.8	3,904,564 2.8	3,903,220 2.5
TOTAL EXP.	125,594,423	140,163,287	158,610,076

Source: Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 1989 - 1992.

57. Although there is no legal requirement that children attend school, the enrollment and attendance rates of both males and females are high at the primary school level and there is no limitation or restriction on girls attending school. However, the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is considering

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[17] 'St. Vincent and the Grenadines Directory of Schools and Colleges -1992/93' Ministry of Education.

proposals to develop regulations to guide education in the State.

58. The enrollment of males (12,543) and females (11,591) in primary school was fairly even in the year 1992. This represented the trend which had obtained over previous years. Even in the rural areas, there is a high level of attendance of females in the primary schools since within St. Vincent and the Grenadines parents tend to place a high value on education and do not retain girls at home for domestic or other chores.

59. Once the child has completed up to a certain level of primary school, usually around the age of 12, there is an entrance examination , called the Common Entrance Examination, which must be sat and passed before the child can go on to secondary school. In the case of females, enrollment figures for 1992 showed that although more males than females enter the Primary school system, more females (4,218) than males (2,956), pass on to enter the Secondary School system. This indicates a higher female retention rate compared to males. This is also consistent with the trend over recent years.

60. Those students who do not pass the examination to enter secondary school, remain in the primary school for a further two years until they become eligible to sit another examination, termed the Primary School Leaving Examination. If they are successful at this they are entitled to enter secondary school. Once females become absorbed in the secondary school system the drop-out rates tend to be low.

61. The curriculum for primary schools, developed by the Ministry of Education with regional support, is enforced in all primary schools. Girls and boys take the same subjects and the textbooks used in the primary and secondary schools are selected by the Ministry of Education. The main examination for primary schools is, as previously stated, the Common Entrance Examination which is sat by both males and females.

62. With the exception of four of the secondary schools all educational institutions are coeducational. This factor enables male and female students to mix freely and share equally the responsibility for utilising and caring for school facilities in the development of healthy interaction. To support this process, the subject of family life education is included by the Ministry of Education as part of the curriculum for all primary schools and there is a staff person within the Ministry responsible for overseeing this program.

63. At the secondary school level the curriculum for the first two years is also set by the Ministry of Education and both males and females take all subjects. In the later forms the students would tend to select the subjects which they wish to take and this would depend on their ability and interest. Most of the work in the

later years is geared towards the sitting of examinations set by the Caribbean Examinations Council or other examination boards. Both males and females sit various subjects in these examinations to prepare them for particular jobs after leaving school or for further study.

64. Women account for the majority of teachers within the primary and secondary school systems, (See Table 16). However the majority of primary and secondary school principals are men.

Table 16: TEACHERS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS CLASSIFIED BY QUALIFICATIONS AS AT 31ST AUGUST, 1992.

Qualification	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Full-Time	Male	Female	Male	female
Approved Graduates	-	-	49	57
Training College	96	275	57	77
Untrained + A or O Levels or Equivalent	298	546	57	66
Specialist Teachers	3	2	11	16
Head Teachers	37	28	13	8
Total	394	821	174	216

* Source : Ministry of Education, 1993.

65. Post-Secondary Education in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is carried out at various institutions within the country. These are mainly the Teachers Training College, the Technical college and the School of Nursing. Within these institutions females outnumbered males during the period 1989-1992.

66. These institutions do not sufficiently meet the demand of the persons within the country for training and some persons may be successful in obtaining scholarships to pursue further education abroad or they may finance their own studies.

67. There is no university within the State, however students have access to the training offered by the University of the West Indies' School of Continuing Studies. This body is connected to the University of the West Indies, a regional university which was established to serve the countries of the English speaking Caribbean. The UWI School of Continuing Studies does not offer Degrees but allows students to commence their degree programme in

the country before completing it at one of the three regional campuses.

68. Table 17 shows that females tend to have a higher level of formal education certification than do males. There were 29% of females with formal education certification than their male counterparts.

Table 17: POPULATION BY HIGHEST CERTIFICATE, DIPLOMA OR DEGREE EARNED AND SEX, 1991 (PERCENTAGE)

Highest Exam Passed	Male	Female	Total
None	90.6	87.9	89.2
School Leaving	2.1	2.7	2.4
Cambridge School Cert	0.1	0.1	0.1
GCE O'Level or CXC	4.3	6.5	5.4
Higher School Certif.	0.3	0.3	0.3
GCE A' Levels	0.3	0.3	0.3
Diploma (Post-Grad.)	0.8	0.7	0.7
Degree	1.0	0.6	0.8
Other	0.5	0.6	0.6
Not Stated	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Source: Population and Housing Census Report, Vol 2.

69. Technical and Vocational training is an important aspect of the educational system at both the primary and the secondary levels although it does not form part of the curriculum for all schools. The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has established three Multipurpose Centres within the country which service some of the primary and secondary institutions. The Multipurpose Centres offer training in Woodwork, Metal Work, Auto-mechanics, Home Economics, Technical Drawing, and Business. This is a three year programme and both males and females are required to take the same subjects. In one such centre, the Georgetown Multipurpose Centre, of a total of 445 students registered for the 1993/94 school year, 228 were females and 217 were males. In the Campden Park Multipurpose Centre, of a total of 435 students, 221 were females and 214 were males.

70. Other technical subjects are offered at the Technical College which is a post-secondary institution. Table 16 shows that for the period 1989 - 1992 females comprised the majority of the student

population for the full-time programme.

71. In addition to the above institutions, males and females in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have equal access to other privately run training programmes, correspondence courses and on the job training opportunities. (See Table 18)

Table 18: POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER WITH ANY FORMAL TRAINING FOR AT LEAST THREE MONTHS BY METHOD OF TRAINING AND SEX, 1991 (PERCENTAGES)

Method of Training	Male	Female	Total
Correspondence Course	5.6	3.6	4.6
On-The Job	22.8	11.9	17.6
Apprenticeship	13.1	8.1	10.7
Institution	55.2	66.2	60.5
Other	2.5	9.2	5.7
Don't Know	0.9	1.0	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Source: Population and Housing Census Report, Vol. 2, 1991.

72. The importance of institutional training is illustrated by Table 18 which shows that it accounts for 60.5% of the population trained. It is also important to note that females are well represented in this area of training as opposed to their male counterparts.

73. The Government also provides access to post-secondary training through its training division within the Public Service Commission which offers short and long term training awards both to Civil Servants and members of the general public. Both males and females have equal access to this training. Training opportunities to the general public are offered to pursue short and long term courses in various disciplines in institutions outside of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These training opportunities are received from international organizations (e.g. WHO, USAID, PAHO, CIDA,etc.), from friendly governments, and from other sources.

74. In 1993, of a total of 287 short-term and long-term awards granted by the training division, 185 were awarded to males and 102 to females. In addition to receiving a higher number of awards overall, males received a higher number of awards in areas such as agriculture, cooperatives, electricity, engineering, environmental health, fisheries,industry, and surveying, whilst females dominated

in the fields of computer science, education, craft, health, and tourism. (See Table 19). This underscores the need for women to become more involved in non-traditional areas, a factor that is slowly changing as the society's perceptions of women's role changes.

Table:19 TRAINING DIVISION

Statistics on Training Awarded in 1993

DISCIPLINE	GRAND TOTALS		
	Male	Female	Totals
ACCOUNTS	1	0	1
AGRICULTURE	23	9	32
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	8	7	15
COMMUNICATIONS	6	2	8
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	0	1	1
COMPUTER SCIENCE	3	10	13
COOPERATIVES	2	0	2
CRAFT	0	3	3
CULTURE	1	0	1
ECONOMICS	5	4	9
EDUCATION	21	26	47
ELECTRICITY	1	0	1
ENGINEERING	6	0	6
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	3	1	4
FINANCE & PLANNING	2	1	3
FISHERIES	1	0	1
HEALTH	8	10	18
HORTICULTURE	1	1	1
INDUSTRY	15	4	19
LAW	2	1	3
MANAGEMENT	11	11	22
MECHANIC	3	0	3
POLICE	54	2	56
PROJECT PLANNING	1	0	1
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	1	0	1

SURVEYING	2	0	2
TOURISM	2	7	9
TRADE	1	2	3
VALUATION	1	0	1
TOTAL STUDENTS	185	102	287

Source: Training Division, Public Service Commission.

75. Despite the achievements in the field of education to date, progress still remains to be made in the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely. At this point the Ministry of Education is experimenting with two programmes for girls who become pregnant to continue in secondary school and the success of this initiative still remains to be seen.

76. Continuing education for girls and women who are not functionally literate also remains an area where more needs to be done. The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has to date no on-going literacy programmes. Most of the literacy programmes are carried on through the Non-governmental organizations most of which are limited by financial and human resource constraints. An Adult Education Coordinator was appointed in 1994 to assist in developing this area.

77. Girls and women are active in sports and physical education since physical education forms part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools. In addition girls are encouraged to participate in one of the many sports clubs and associations which exist within the State. Netball, a game played by females, is supported in the country by the private sector and by Government. The Government also assists sporting clubs and associations through the Ministry responsible for Sports. The National Sports Council, a government run agency, provides much needed guidance in the development of sports within the State.

ARTICLE 11

ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;

(b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;

(c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;

(d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;

(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction;

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;

(b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

(c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;

(d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective Legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

ARTICLE 11

ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

78. The Constitution of St. Vincent and the Grenadines does not ensure the right to work to all Vincentians. This is mainly as a result of the economic situation within the country which would make such a provision highly unenforceable. However, generally within the Constitution, Vincentian women are provided with some protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex, which would include discrimination in the area of employment.

79. In St.Vincent and the Grenadines, women's participation in the labour force grew at a higher rate (2.6% per annum) than males (2.3% per annum) between the period 1980 and 1991. Despite this fact, however, in 1991 of the total Labour Force of 41,682 persons, 26,734 (64%) were males and 14,948 (36%) were females. The data indicates however that out of the total labour force in 1991 females had a higher unemployment rate (22.1%) than males (18.4%). It also showed that the participation rates for males (80.8%) in the labour force was almost twice that of females (44.3%). (See Table 7, Appendix I).

80. The domestic roles which by tradition women play within the society is reflected by the fact that women who remain at home as housewives are not considered as being economically active. In 1991 about 96% of the males in the age group 20 - 54 were economically active as compared with 54% of the females. In that same year, of the total number of females over 15 years old, it was found that 71.2% were inactive due to home duties or household duties in their own homes [18]. This factor seriously reflects the need for more employment opportunities for women within St. Vincent and the Grenadines, especially given the number of female headed households.

81. The highest number of persons in the labour force are employed in the private sector. Out of a total employed population of 33,444, 24,749 or 74% were paid employees with Government or the private sector. Of the total number of paid employees, 28.0% worked with Government and 72% worked with the private sector[19]. A large percentage of females (27% of the total number of females employed) are government employees.

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[18] 1991 Population and Housing Census Report, Vol 2., pg. 43 Ministry of Finance and Planning.

[19] Ibid pg 48.

employed) are government employees.

82. For those women who are employed in either the public or private sector, most of them (29.7%) work in such occupations as sales and services, agriculture, forestry and fisheries at the lower levels of these occupations. A lesser percentage (15.7%) were engaged as technicians, and associated professionals and clerks. In comparison, only 5.9% of the male worked in this group. The difference is mainly due to the higher numbers of females in the teaching and nursing professions[20]. The relatively higher number of females in these occupations does not, however, reflect the total number of females who receive formal training in institutions, nor does it reflect the overall number of females who receive education at the secondary level. Many females with formal education and training still remain at home, either from choice or due to lack of employment opportunities. This is reflected by the fact that there are more unemployed females (33.2%) than males (17.6%) with secondary education.

83. There is little data on the wage and income levels for men and women in the various occupations. The minimum wage for industrial, agricultural and domestic workers has been set by Wages Regulation Orders passed in 1989. The minimum wage for men and women is equal under these regulations. The Government of St.Vincent and the Grenadines has also shown its intention to remove any discrimination in this area by the passage of the Equal Pay Act (No. 3 of 1994) which seeks to make provision for the removal of discrimination, based on the sex of the employee, in the rates of remuneration for males and females in paid employment. By virtue of this Act, employees who discriminate between males and females by paying different wages for equal work commits an offence and is liable to a fine if convicted.

84. The Equal Pay Act also expressly states that favourable treatment received by an employee in connection with the birth or expected birth of a child is not to be considered as discrimination between females and males.

85. As discussed under Article 10 of this Report, women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have in principle equal access to vocational training and retraining opportunities, apprenticeships and recurrent training. However social and cultural factors often limit women's ability to take full advantage of training opportunities the actual number of women trained.

86. Two pieces of legislation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines regulate maternity leave. This is contained in the Wages Regulation which regulates wages for domestic workers and provides for domestic workers to be granted 13 weeks maternity

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[20] Ibid pg. 45

leave with pay after she has been employed for one employer for two years. This is a matter which will require examination in the future and on which some further statement may be made in the next Report. In practice, civil servants are allowed maternity leave of one month with pay and three months without pay. Some female workers have benefitted from collective agreements negotiated on their behalf by their trade unions which include maternity leave provisions.

87. Women who are employed have access to social security benefits provided for by the National Insurance Scheme (NIS). Chapter 229 of the Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines makes provision for the payment of maternity benefit, a payment or periodical payment to an insured woman or the wife of an insured man. To qualify for maternity leave a woman must at least have paid 30 weekly contributions.

Table: 20

MATERNITY BENEFIT PAID UNDER NATIONAL INSURANCE SCHEME, 1993

G. Maternity Benefit:	YEAR TO DATE			
Distribution by age:	No	Value	Grant	Weeks Paid
16-19	5	2,528	250	51
20-24	91	77,042	4,450	981
25-29	139	142,879	6,908	1402
30-34	102	123,902	5,050	996
35-39	48	29,311	2,450	477
40 and over	8	7,625	450	61
TOTAL	393	403,289	19,558	3968

Source: National Insurance Scheme, Statistical report, November 1993, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

88. The NIS legislation also makes provision for benefits to be paid in the cases of sickness, invalidity, retirement, and death. However there is no provision for persons who are self-employed to participate in the Scheme, nor is there provision for employment injury.

Table: 21

EMPLOYEES REGISTERED BY INDUSTRY, NATIONAL INSURANCE SCHEME, 1993

EMPLOYEES	Year to date		
	Males	Females	Total
Distribution by Industry			
Agriculture	17	3	20
Mining/Quarrying	1	0	1
Manufacturing	32	38	70
Electricity	13	4	17
Construction	599	284	883
Trade	147	215	362
Finance/Insurance	15	27	42
Social service/Domestic	283	310	548
Communication	2	0	2
TOTAL	1,064	881	1945

Source: National Insurance Scheme Statistical Report, November 1993, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

89. Women who work as domestics do not benefit as much as they should under the NIS because all employers do not send in the required information and contributions in order for women to benefit. Many women, particularly those who work in homes as domestics are not registered under the Scheme.

90. One positive aspect of the social security legislation is that in keeping with social and cultural norms, the NIS makes provision, in payment of benefits for women who are not legally married but who are living in common-law relationships.

91. Women who work under specified conditions are regulated by the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act[21]. This law restricts the employment of women, young persons and children in certain industrial undertakings which includes mines, quarries etc. Women are prohibited from working at night in such undertakings.

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[21] Chapter 148, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Given the fact that women are entering the labour force in larger numbers and also given the fact that a large number of women are heads of households, the restriction placed on women in this respect needs to be examined.

92. The safety of all workers is governed by regulations under the Factories and Machinery regulations[22]. However, the influx of foreign companies and the increase in industrial undertakings since the legislation was made has added to the safety, health and welfare considerations to be taken into account. These regulations have health and welfare provisions which seek to ensure that proper working conditions are given to workers. However these regulations do not specifically make provision for protection of the reproductive functions of women.

93. The human and financial resource constraints within the Ministry of Labour do not always make it possible for thorough checks to be made of factories and work sites and employers do not always notify the Labour Department's Officers of accidents and occupational diseases as they are required to do under the Accidents and Occupational Diseases (Notification) Act[23].

94. The facilities available within St. Vincent and the Grenadines for child care are rapidly expanding. There are approximately 80 facilities and these are all privately owned and run. However the problem still remains that of cost, capacity, and standards. Standards vary in that there are sometimes inadequate accommodation and furnishings, equipment, and lack of trained staff. Due to the fact that these facilities are privately run many of them experience problems in financing their operations and have to depend entirely on parental contributions. Often this reflects on the quality of service available. It also means that in order to provide a better service parents are often asked to increase their contributions and this sometimes put child care out of the reach of some working people. The capacity presently in place for child care does not meet the demand in the rural as well as urban areas.

95. There is as yet no regulatory body to address these issues. Some progress has been made towards the development of more active government involvement in setting policies and monitoring the operation of child care. The Ministry of Education by virtue of the Education Act has lain the basis for the development of a regulatory body. There is a Pre-School Services Committee, a non-governmental body which provides informal guidelines for its members. Despite this factor, many working women are able to benefit from existing facilities which normally open at 7 am and close at 6 p.m.

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[22] Chapter 335, Vol. VIII , Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

[23] Chapter 144, Revised Laws Of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol.4

ARTICLE 12

HEALTH

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

ARTICLE 12

HEALTH

96. Both males and females have equal access to health care services in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The largest health care facility is the Kingstown General Hospital which has 207 beds and is geared towards the provision of acute in-patient ambulatory care. The other health care facilities include five smaller rural hospitals and thirty-eight clinics. Health services at all of the Government owned facilities are free of cost to the consumer while a nominal bed charge of E.C.$1.00 per day for the general ward and E.C. $ 15.00 per day for private beds is charged. A subsidised fee is charged for special services such as Laboratory tests, X-rays etc. which are carried out at the Laboratory within the General Hospital. There are two private hospitals based in Kingstown. The percentage of Government's total recurrent budget dedicated to health financing is shown in Table 15.

97. The district health centres, distributed within reach of most rural communities, are all staffed with a nursing assistant, a community health aide and a nurse and provide ante-natal care, post-natal care and family planning counselling. They are serviced by a doctor who covers more than one clinic in a particular district. Serious cases are referred to the Kingstown General Hospital.

98. The total nursing population includes 149 staff nurses. This figure does not only include females. There is one trained male nurse/ midwife and one trained nurse who is also training to be a midwife. There are also five male nurses who are presently in various stages of training. It is hoped that more males will enter the nursing profession.

99. The Ministry of Health has been collecting data on the major causes of morbidity . For 1989 these causes ranked in the following order:

1. Hypertension
2. Upper Respiratory tract Infections
3. Helminthiasis
4. Scabies
5. Other skin infections
6. Diabetes
7. Arthritis
8. Gastroenteritis
9. Anaemia
10. Bronchitis

This pattern appeared to have remained unchanged during the period 1985 - 1989 with the same disease conditions being prominent although not always in the same rank order.

100. Of increasing significance within the State is the incidence of AIDS. The data indicates that the highest incidence of the disease occurs in persons within the 25 - 29 age range. Although the number of males has been shown to be higher, there are still a relatively high number of females with AIDS. Children have been affected as well, with at least two cases occurring under four years.

Table: 22
AIDS CASES BY YEAR OF DIAGNOSIS AND HIV DEATHS BY YEAR OF OCCURRENCE

YEAR	AIDS CASES	HIV DEATHS
1984	1	1
1985	0	0
1986	2	1
1987	5	3
1988	6	5
1989	7	6
1990	7	7
1991	12	13
1992	5	6
1993	9	8
UNKNOWN	1	0
TOTAL	58	56

Case fatality rate = 96.6%
Source: Ministry of Health, National AIDS/STD Programme.

101. In light of the growing seriousness of AIDS , the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines started a National AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention and control programme in 1989. The programme is geared towards prevention of transmission of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The Programme has sought to increase the capacity of the Government Laboratory to screen blood received from donors. It has also sought to improve the training of health care workers in the counselling, follow-up, and clinical management of the disease.

102. The Programme works closely with the Government run National Family Planning Coordinator in focussing on the increased use of condoms in prevention of transmission. Condoms are distributed widely through the State free of cost both through the Clinics and hospitals . Some condoms are also distributed in Bars and other places of entertainment. The National AIDS programme also works in collaboration with the Health Education unit in the Ministry of health to disseminate information about AIDS in schools and communities through the use of drama, radio programmes and other medium. Some myths regarding the use of condoms still prevail and the fact that it depends on the man's willingness to use it places many females at risk.

103. The National AIDS/STD Coordinator has also had the task of updating monitoring and surveillance systems, developing policies and protocols for the management of AIDS cases. With respect to women and AIDS the Coordinator has collaborated with the Health

Education Unit to provide information to the public on the issues of "AIDS and Breastfeeding" and "AIDS and Pregnancy". In addition direct information to women is passed through the nurses in the clinics and health centres. The Coordinator also works directly with womens groups on issues related to women and AIDS.

104. The overall strategy of the Ministry of Health has been to focus on prevention since the treatment of AIDS is expensive . The programme targets a wide cross-section of the population, however a major gap remains the difficulty in reaching the sexually active young population who are not part of organised groups. The actual cases of AIDS are usually treated by the Hospital system, although Legislation still has not addressed the issue of AIDS and reporting mechanisms for private physicians.

105. Support to the National AIDS/STD programme is provided by both the National Family Planning Programme and the Health Education Unit within the Ministry of Health. The Health Education programme is geared towards health education, risk reduction and disease prevention and is responsible for health education throughout the State . It has two on-going daily radio programmes aired nationally as part of its strategy of mass education. These programmes offer advice and information on ante-natal and post-natal care, family planning, breastfeeding, and other issues vital to women. The Health Education Unit also conducts training sessions and counselling particularly in the area of family life education, sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS, drug abuse, diabetes, hypertension and cancer.

106. The National Family Planning Programme within the Ministry of Health is geared towards providing support to the Family Planning services offered in the district clinics, hospitals and the public. There is still a high fertility rate among teenagers although this is tending to decline. (See Table 23) However since this has other repercussions within the society it is still a factor for concern.

Table 23: Number of Births by Age Group of Mothers 1988 - 1992

Age group	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
10 - 14	16	20	24	15	26
15 - 19	620	615	585	585	566
20 - 24	829	834	749	782	791
25 - 29	583	590	616	637	678
30 - 34	312	336	393	384	381
35 - 39	133	128	127	148	177
40 - 44	25	39	34	18	48
45 - 49	2	1	5	2	6
Not Stated	17	1	19	20	13
Total	2,537	2,564	2,552	2,591	2,686

Source: Registrar's Office, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

107. The Services of the Ministry of Health is reinforced by the work of the St. Vincent Planned Parenthood Association, a non-profit organization which focusses on training, providing counselling, distribution of contraceptives at subsidised rates and public education.

108. Tubal ligations as a form of family planning is often practiced especially by women who have had all the children they wish to have. Permission for this operation usually has to be given by the husband, in the case of a married woman.

109. Another area of concern to women is that of cancer. The incidence of deaths from Breast, Uterine and Cervical Cancer is shown in Table 24. The diagnosis for cancer can be done within the Government Laboratory facilities in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The Laboratory is equipped to do cervical Pap smears and biopsies. The Surgical Unit of the Kingstown General Hospital is also equipped to carry out Mastectomies and Hysterectomies however patients must be referred overseas, usually in Barbados, for treatment in Radium Therapy. Treatment outside of the State can be paid for from the Ministry of Health's Budget for Overseas Care. However there is usually a long waiting list for these limited funds and therefore patients who wish to have rapid treatment overseas must pay for it privately.

Table 24: DEATHS CAUSED BY CERTAIN TYPES OF CANCER 1988 - 1992

TYPE OF CANCER	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
BREAST CANCER	9	8	6	6	8
UTERINE CANCER	5	3	3	5	3
CERVICAL CANCER	7	9	11	9	10
TOTAL	21	20	20	20	21

* Source: Records, Kingstown General Hospital, Ministry of Health and the Environment.

110. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Cancer Society was formed in 1993 to carry out various objectives in relation to cancer. These include:

- relieving and preventing the sickness and disability caused by cancer;
-investigating its causes and distribution, and promoting effective treatment and cure;
-disseminating information and educating the public on the subject of cancer, its signs, symptoms, treatment, pathology and preventive measures;
- obtaining money by public appeals or otherwise.

111. Much progress has been made in the general area of pregnancy, childbirth and post-natal care by the Ministry of Health. Ante-

natal clinics carried out in the District Health Centres by trained nurses provide physical examinations, blood-testing and other investigations. 'The statistics indicate that while the overwhelming majority of pregnant women pay at least three ante-natal clinic visits during any one pregnancy, only about 70% of them begin those visits before the end of their second trimester. On the other hand, virtually all new mothers follow the prescribed guidelines for post-natal checks. The continuing insignificant maternal mortality rates (less than 1/1000) over the past decade have been attributed to the high levels of ante-natal and post-natal care provided.'[24] Delivery can be done in some District Health Centres, however, not all are equipped to perform this and many women prefer to go to the Kingstown General Hospital. Within St. Vincent and the Grenadines there is no form of circumcision practiced on girls.

112. The Ministry of Health and the Environment also houses the Nutrition Unit which provides important services to women. Among its functions, the unit conducts counselling sessions on breastfeeding, hypertension, diabetes and obesity for women who attend the district clinics. The staff at the Unit is also responsible for keeping a record of the haemoglobin levels of children who attend the clinic. As part of its outreach programme the Unit forms groups within communities and conducts training sessions on such topics as breastfeeding and practical sessions on the preparation of weaning foods for babies. Sessions on issues related to food and nutrition are also held with nurses at the School of nursing and teachers at one of the pre-schools.

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[24] Health Sector Plan 1991-1995, pg.24, Ministry of Health and the Environment, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

ARTICLE 13.

WOMEN IN SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to family benefits.

(b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;

(c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

ARTICLE 13

WOMEN IN SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

113. Women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have equal access as men to any benefits offered by the Government. Under the Income Tax Act, both men and women have equal right to claim a tax allowance for any children they might have. In addition both men and women can claim any of the benefits available under the National Insurance scheme.

114. Women also have the right to take out, on their own, loans, conclude mortgages and enter into other financial commitments without the prior consent of their husbands. In the cases where loans are made by a married woman, the bank examines her request for a loan and makes a decision based on the amount of the loan and the type of security offered. In some cases the Bank may request her husbands signature to the loan where her salary is not enough to cover the amount of the loan. However men are also requested sometimes to have their wives co-sign with them for adequate security when requesting loans.

115. In 1992 , the Development Corporation, a statutory body which provides loans for development purposes, approved a total of 188 loans to men whilst only 35 loans to women were made in the same year. The great difference in the number of loans approved to males was due to a large number of loans made to men for planting bananas. Women usually seek loans for planting root crops and these types of loans are lesser in number although they are expected to increase given the country's present thrust towards agricultural diversification. Both males and females are usually required to provide some form of collateral. They are usually not pressed to present titles to land and both tend to use gaurantors as security. In the areas of education and industry, there was less of a difference. In that same year an equal amount of loans were approved for males and females in education and in 1993 more loans were approved to females than males for education.

116. Women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been representing the State in international sports meetings in keeping with a tradition of full involvement in all forms of sports. They have particularly excelled in the field of Netball, a sport mainly played by females nationally and internationally. Women and girls all over the country regularly participate in the sport.

117. Women have the right to fully participate in other recreational activities and they do so, mainly by joining one of the numerous community clubs and organizations which plan various recreational activities. They also have the full right to participate in the cultural life of the country. There are a number of dance, drama and music festivals and workshops organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Culture and Women's Affairs which have a high participation of females.

ARTICLE 14

RURAL WOMEN

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of this Convention to women in rural areas.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

(a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;

(b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;

(c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;

(d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;

(e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment;

(f) To participate in all community activities;

(g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as land resettlement schemes;

(h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

ARTICLE 14

RURAL WOMEN

118. Despite the small size of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the patterns of coastal settlement for the majority of the population, there are areas within the mainland which can be distinctly classified as rural where subsistence agriculture is the main basis of the people's survival.

119. An Agricultural census conducted in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 1986 showed that females amounted to 1,878 out of a total of 6,691 agricultural holders. A holder for the purpose of the Census was a person who had full responsibility for the holding either as an owner or tenant. This person, under conditions of traditional agriculture prevailing in most of St. Vincent and the Grenadines decides on what crop to grow and livestock to graze and has the right to determine the utilization of the products [25].

120. Although a higher percentage of males than females were classified as holders, an almost equal number of females (20,602) and males (21,218) lived in agricultural households. Of that number a total of 12,533 persons in the household were engaged mainly in agricultural work on the holding. Males accounted for 7,536 of this figure and females accounted for 4,997.

121. These figures give some indication of the importance of women in the agricultural sector but there has not been sufficient research done on the specific problems faced by rural women and this is an area which needs to be addressed. The contribution of rural women has therefore not been computed as a part of GDP. Despite this fact, however the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has through its various development programmes been seeking to tackle the problems experienced in rural areas by rural people. It has resulted in direct benefits to rural women such as improved public transportation system, whereby almost all areas are serviced by some form of public transport.

122. There are other direct improvements to the rural areas which have been put into place and which particularly affect rural women. In the area of health, a wide network of district health clinics provide medical services in cases of emergencies, antenatal and post natal care and other health services. These health services include the provision of family planning.

123. Education for children in the rural areas is available through primary and secondary schools most of which are within reach of rural communities. Most areas are serviced by electricity and telecommunications although water remains a problem in some areas.

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[25] 1985 - 1986 Agricultural Census for St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 1989, Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Labour.

124. Despite these advances, Rural women still experience some problems. They have difficulty in accessing safe and affordable child care facilities whilst they attend to their agricultural plots. They also have difficulty in accessing credit for agricultural and other economic activities. Extension services are available from the Ministry of Agriculture as well as other non-governmental agencies.

125. Within St. Vincent and the Grenadines the demand for agricultural land is high due to the small size of the island. The Government is carrying out a comprehensive land reform programme involving 20% of the arable land in the country which was previously under the control of large estates. The land reform programme is being carried out under three separate projects which will bring into operation over 4,500 acres of arable land. This land will be divided into over 1185 small farms ranging between 1 - 7 acres in size. The Programme is not yet completed however approximately 35% of the farms have so far been leased to women.

126. There is no legal barrier to women's participation in self-help groups and cooperatives. Women in the rural areas are already participating in farming organizations, cooperatives and other associations. However, within St. Vincent and the Grenadines there is still scope for women in the rural areas to be more organised around specific issues facing rural women.

127. Women in the rural areas are very much involved in community activities and indeed most community groups are either headed by women or have a majority of female members. These groups focus on social, cultural or religious programmes.

ARTICLE 15

EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.

2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.

3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

ARTICLE 15

EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW.

128. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines equal access is provided to both men and women to the courts. The Vincentian Judicial system at all levels recognises this equality. As explained earlier the Judicial system of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is part of a wider sub-regional system formed by all the OECS countries.

129. Although before the law men and women are equal and have the same opportunities to exercise that capacity, it is limited by the fact that women have fewer financial resources than men and are less able to take advantage of legal services. There is no legal aid facility in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

130. Women have an equal right to conclude contracts and to administer property.

131. Both women and men have equal rights before the law with regard to their freedom of movement and the choice of residence or domicile. The Domicile Act[26] is a recent legislation which makes several changes in previous laws relating to domicile. These include the following:

(a) A married woman's domicile is no longer the same as her husband's merely by virtue of marriage but is determined on an independent basis, based on her choice of domicile;

(b) An independent domicile can be obtained from the age of sixteen ;

(c) The domicile of a child living with the mother becomes that of the mother.

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[26] Chapter 166, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V.

ARTICLE 16

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same right to enter into marriage;

(b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free will and full consent;

(c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

(d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;

(f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in the national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;

(h) The same rights of both spouses in respect of ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

ARTICLE 16

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

132. Both men and women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are free to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage once they have attained the age of eighteen years. Under the Age of Majority Act, [27] the age of majority was reduced from twenty- one to eighteen years. Any male or female wishing to get married at a younger age must have the consent of a parent or guardian.

133. Every marriage must be with the consent of both parties. The Marriage Act [28] states that in the ceremony each of the parties must make a declaration signifying their consent to the marriage. Arranged marriages or the practice of payment of a dowry are not the custom in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

134. The Marriage Act also prohibits and makes void marriages solemnised between a female under the age of fifteen and a male under the age of sixteen. The registration of all marriages is compulsory. All marriages solemnised in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are kept in a register which is kept in the custody of the Registrar General of the High Court. All marriage officers are required to immediately register marriages solemnised by them and if this is not done they are subject to prosecution.

135. Once a woman is married she is free to retain her maiden name or she may wish to take her husbands name or a combination of both. Most women in St. Vincent and the Grenadines opt to take their husbands surname although this practice is slowly changing.

136. During the marriage a woman has the right to take her spouse to court in the case where she is being abused. Under the Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act [29] the woman has equal right to apply to the court for an injunction restraining the other party to the marriage from using violence against her or children living with her and excluding her husband from the matrimonial home. There is presently before the House of Assembly a Bill to extend the provisions made under this Act to give the Court more detailed powers to make Orders.

137. A woman in St. Vincent and the Grenadines also has the same right as her spouse to apply during the marriage to the Court under

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[27] Chapter 164, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V,1991.

[28] Chapter 173, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V, 1991.

[29] Chapter 165, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V, 1990

the Matrimonial Homes Act[30] for an order preventing her from being evicted by the spouse from the matrimonial home. This law can serve to protect women from being thrown out in cases where they have no legal right by virtue of ownership or other legal interest to remain in the matrimonial home.

138. During the marriage women and men have the same rights. With respect to the care, custody and control of children who are under the age of eighteen, the Law of Minors Act,[31] gives equal rights and authority to a mother as the law allows to a father and the rights and authority of mother and father shall be equal and be exercisable by either without the other. Where there is disagreement between the mother or father on any question relating to the welfare of the child either of them may apply to the court for directions. The Law of Minor's Act has as its basic principle in relation to any question regarding custody or upbringing of the child, that the welfare of the minor is the paramount consideration.

139. Women and men have equal rights to apply for custody of a minor. Any party who is granted custody of a child under the Law of Minors Act may apply to the Court an order to determine access and for the other parent to pay maintenance for the child.

140. A married women has the right to be maintained by her husband under the Maintenance Act[32], but if she has separate property she also has an equal responsibility to maintain her husband and children under sixteen as well as her father, mother and any dependant.

141. Married women have equal rights and responsibilities with men with regard to guardianship, trusteeship and adoption of children. Married women with separate property are equally responsible with men for the maintenance of her children and grandchildren. They also have equal rights under the Married Women's Property Act to own, acquire, manage and dispose of property in their own names[33]. On marriage their property does not automatically pass to the husband.

142. Once the marriage is to be dissolved, the same grounds for divorce apply equally to men and women . Under the Matrimonial

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[30] Chapter 177 , Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V, 1990

[31] Chapter 169, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines 1990.

[32] Chapter 171, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V. 1990

[33] Chapter 175, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Vol V, 1990

Causes Act[11], either wife or husband may petition to have the marriage dissolved on the ground that it has irretrievably broken down.

143. On dissolution of marriage the woman has an equal right to apply to the court for property acquired before and during the marriage even if the property is solely in the husband's name. She can also apply for an order for maintenance for herself and any children they might have had.

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[11] Chapter 176, Revised Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, 1991

APPENDIX I

STATISTICS - DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

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Table 1: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE GROUP

AGE DISTRIBUTION	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
0-14	39,545	39,851	39,939	40,050	40,101
15-44	46,819	47,192	47,551	49,100	50,397
45-64	11,093	11,326	11,324	11,482	11,443
65+ years	6,609	6,502	6,868	7,007	7,030
TOTAL	104,066	104,871	105,682	107,639	108,965

Source: Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Planning.

TABLE 2

Population and Vital Statistics

	1990	1991	1992
Total Population	105,682	107,639	108,965
Male	52,618	53,734	54,396
Female	53,064	53,905	54,569
Population Density (per sq.km)	271	276	279
Birth Rate	24.1	24.3	24.7
Death Rate	6.5	6.1	6.6
Infant Mortality Rate	20.8	19.3	17.1
Rate of Natural Increase	18.1	18.2	18.2

Source: Vital Statistics Report

TABLE 3

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT FACTOR COST BY KIND OF ACTIVITY: AT CURRENT PRICES (PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION)

1987 – 1992

INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992*
1. Agriculture	17.02	18.16	17.40	18.98	16.60	17.36
1.1 Crops	13.10	14.41	13.70	15.48	13.12	13.90
1.2 Livestock	1.11	1.04	1.00	0.92	0.90	0.88
1.3 Forestry	0.77	0.73	0.71	0.67	0.66	0.67
1.4 Fishing	2.04	1.98	1.99	1.91	1.92	1.91
2 Mining and Quarrying	0.30	0.27	0.27	0.28	0.29	0.30
3. Manufacturing	10.29	10.66	11.01	8.71	9.09	8.88
4. Electricity and water	4.25	4.94	4.87	4.88	4.79	4.64
5. Construction	9.91	9.28	9.19	9.56	9.78	10.17
6. Wholesale & Retail Trade	11.16	10.84	11.18	11.70	12.41	12.84
7. Hotels and Restaurants	2.16	2.06	2.11	2.28	2.38	2.47
8. Transport	13.60	13.50	13.19	14.01	13.61	13.45
8.1 Road Transport	8.93	8.59	8.20	9.29	9.33	9.21
8.2 Sea Transport	3.06	3.38	3.48	3.23	2.84	2.70
8.3 Air Transport	1.61	1.53	1.51	1.49	1.44	1.48
9. Communications	5.64	6.27	7.15	6.79	7.87	7.45
10. Banks and Insurance	6.91	6.82	8.13	8.40	8.20	7.90
11. Real Estate and Housing	3.15	2.89	2.78	2.72	2.70	2.62
12. Government Services	17.47	16.65	17.30	15.75	16.20	15.69
13. Other Services	2.19	2.01	1.91	1.87	1.86	1.80
14. Less Imputed Service Charges	4.09	4.33	6.50	5.92	5.76	5.58
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Statistical Office

R – Revised
* Preliminary

TABLE 4

CONSUMER PRICE INDICES BY MAJOR GROUPS

GROUPS	Base Year 1981	1992	1993
All Items	100	159.8	166.3
Food & Beverages	100	151.3	155.0
Tobacco & Alcohol	100	174.4	178.0
Clothing & Footwear	100	158.1	160.1
Housing	100	202.3	260.6
Fuel & Light	100	147.9	146.1
Furniture, Furnishings & Domestic Appliances	100	122.3	135.5
Household Supplies	100	142.1	147.0
Transport & Communication	100	217.5	220.3
Other–	100	197.8	198.1

Source: Statistical Office

TABLE 5

ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF SELECTED COMMODITIES

1983 – 1992

COMMODITY	UNIT	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Rum	000 P.Gal	105	81	145	131	136	106	149	119	131	155
Sweet Potatoes	000 Kg	1,084	2,317	8,529	11,802	4,596	7,962	3,933	2,847	2,513	1,706
Yams	000 Kg	1,251	3,773	3,262	783	612	670	356	2,147	2,634	2,147
Tannias	000 Kg	2,959	6,512	9,354	9,711	2,947	6,034	1,373	577	668	577
Eddoes, Dasheen	000 Kg	8,428	16,068	25,326	20,964	7,474	15,757	5,689	5,240	4,991	5,240
Arrowroot Starch	000 Kg	1,001	783	434	315	161	112	113	56	63	73
Bananas	000 Kg	34,921	33,556	41,922	39,986	37,472	64,649	66,752	82,725	64,779	78,182
Nutmegs	000 Kg	74	73	53	81	88	129	68	73	73	73
Mace	000 Kg	17	20	34	11	13	16	14	17	16	17
Ginger	000 Kg	174	122	362	545	668	1,116	823	834	859	834
Peanuts	000 Kg	64	84	45	112	112	112	129	149	152	...
Tobacco	000 Kg	75	41	73	66	76	56	41	9	7	...
Plantains	000 Kg	1,473	3,099	4,222	4,619	2,776	3,090	1,990	1,339	1,455	1,339

Source: Statistics Unit, Ministry of Agriculture ,Industry & Labour
St. Vincent Arrowroot Industry Association.
St. Vincent Banana Growers Association.
St. Vincent Marketing Corporation.
Statistical Office Estimates.

Table 6. EXTERNAL DEBT (EC$ MILLION)

YEAR	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
External Debt	5.7	4.6	3.3	3.3	3.0
% of GDP	2.3	1.6	1.0	0.9	0.8
Disbursed Debt Out-Standing	29.3	38.0	35.0	39.9	42.6
% of GDP	11.6	13.4	11.0	11.1	10.8

Source: St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Development Plan, 1991 - 1995

TABLE 7

Labour Force and Participation Rates by Sex

Years	1980			1991		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Adult Population 15+	51,482	24,121	27,361	66,873	33,104	33,769
Labour Force	32,108	20,824	11,284	41,682	26,734	14,948
Employed	24,554	16,035	8,519	33,444	21,803	11,641
Unemployed	7,554	4,789	2,765	8,238	4,931	3,307
Unemployment Rate	23.5	23.0	24.5	19.8	18.4	22.1
Participation Rate	62.4	86.3	41.2	62.3	80.8	44.3

Source: Population and Housing Census Report

TABLE 8

Employment by Major Occupational Group 1980

Occupational Groups	Males	Females	Total
Professional Technical and Related	1208	1436	2644
Administrative and Managerial	203	51	254
Clerical and Related Workers	999	1252	2251
Sales	883	998	1881
Services	950	1924	2874
Agriculture and Related	5194	1499	6693
Production and Related	7162	1533	8695
Not Stated	3696	2575	6271

Source: Population and Housing Census Report

TABLE 9

Employment by Major Occupational Group 1991

Occupational Groups	Males	Females	Total
Legislators, Seniors, Managers	1063	750	1813
Professionals	668	353	1021
Technicians & Associate Prof.	1288	1793	3081
Clerks	706	1832	2538
Service Workers & Related	1817	1870	3687
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery	3847	726	4573
Craft and Related	4685	696	5381
Plant Operators and Assemblers	1904	147	2051
Elementary Occupations	5799	3460	9259
Not Stated	26	14	40

Source: Population and Housing Census Report

Table 10: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SEX 1980 AND 1991

Ethnic Group	1980 Male	Female	Total
African/Negro/Black	82.3	81.8	82.0
East Indian	1.6	1.6	1.6
Portuguese	0.5	0.5	0.5
White	1.1	1.1	1.1
Mixed	13.7	14.1	13.9
Other	0.3	0.4	0.4
Not stated	0.4	0.5	0.5
All Groups	100.0	100.0	100.0

Ethnic Group	1991 Male	Female	Total
African/Negro/Black	78.2	75.9	77.1
Amerindian/Carib	0.3	3.3	3.1
East Indian	1.3	1.4	1.4
Portuguese	0.5	0.5	0.5
White	0.9	1.0	0.9
Mixed	15.5	17.4	16.4
Other	0.1	0.1	0.1
Not stated	0.5	0.4	0.4
All Groups	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Statistical Office

Table 11(a): PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION
BY RELIGION AND SEX
1980

Religion	1980		
	Male	Female	Total
Anglican	42.3	40.9	41.6
Baptist(Spiritual)	5.0	6.8	5.9
Brethren	1.1	1.3	1.2
Church-of-God	2.0	2.4	20.9
Jehovah Witness	0.4	0.4	0.4
Methodist	21.3	20.6	20.9
Pentecostal	3.7	4.3	4.0
Presbyterian/Congregational	0.1	0.1	0.1
Roman Catholic	11.8	11.3	11.6
Salvation Army	0.2	0.2	0.2
Seventh Day Adventist	4.1	4.7	4.4
Other	4.6	5.1	4.9
None	2.2	1.1	1.6
Not Stated	1.2	0.8	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Statistical Office

Table 11(b): PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY RELIGION AND SEX
1991

Religion	1991		
	Male	Female	Total
Anglican	28.8	26.6	27.7
Baptist(Spiritual)	8.2	11.1	9.6
Brethren	1.3	1.5	1.4
Church-of-God	2.0	2.6	2.3
Jehovah Witness	0.5	0.6	0.6
Methodist	15.7	14.7	15.2
Pentecostal	9.4	11.5	10.4
Presbyterian/Congregational	0.1	0.1	0.1
Roman Catholic	9.8	9.1	9.5
Salvation Army	0.2	0.2	0.2
Seventh Day Adventist	7.6	9.0	8.3
Rastafarian	1.4	0.3	0.8
Other	7.2	8.8	8.0
None	6.3	2.8	4.5
Not Stated	1.6	1.0	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Statistical Office

Table 12: NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS AND SEX OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD 1980 AND 1991

Marital Status	1980		1991		% Change
Male	Number	%	Number	%	
Married	6,100	52.2	7,338	44.8	20.3
Widowed	409	3.5	562	3.4	37.4
Divorced	108	0.9	347	2.1	221.3
Legally Separated	76	0.7	149	0.9	96.1
Never Married	4,976	42.6	7,986	48.7	60.5
Not Stated	25	0.2	3	0.0	-88.0
Total	11,694	100.0	16,385	100.0	40.1
Female					
Married	1,407	16.4	1,537	14.5	9.2
Widowed	1,134	13.2	1,437	13.5	26.7
Divorced	110	1.3	302	2.8	174.5
Legally Separated	72	0.8	148	1.4	105.6
Never Married	5,866	68.2	7,188	67.7	22.5
Not Stated	7	0.1	5	0.0	-28.6
Total	8,596	100.0	10,617	100.0	23.5

SOURCE: Statistical Office

APPENDIX II

LIST OF SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS ACCOMPANYING THIS REPORT

1. Equal Pay Act (No. 3 of 1994) Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

2. The Domicile Act, Chapter 166, Vol V, Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

3. Family Court Act, (No. 53 of 1992) Laws of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.